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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP
~~INTELLIGENCE REPORT~~

COUNTRY Greece

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SUBJECT IDEA and the Army High Command

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1. When George Varvoutis, Minister of National Economy, informed IDEA of the Liberal Party's insistence on the return of General Mahas to the position of Deputy Chief of Staff, IDEA refused to comply on the basis of the regulation preventing the re-entry into the army of persons once separated from it. The organization suggested the appointment of an active officer, who enjoys the confidence of the Liberal Party, as one of the Deputy Chiefs of Staff or the appointment of Mahas as commander of the Gendarmerie.
2. Varvoutis also recommended that IDEA try to persuade Tsaldaris to give up his support of General Ventiris as Chief of Staff, a patronage necessitated by Tsaldaris' desire to retain the friendship of the newspaper, Embros, edited by Ventiris' brother. IDEA was reluctant to approach Tsaldaris through fear that the politician might reveal such an action in order to expose the organization.
3. Minister of War George Stratos is long reported to have favored the removal of Ventiris, but, as a member of the Populist Party, he is considered unable to exert much influence.
4. The members of IDEA feel that the question of the Army Command at present has the following status:
 - a. The Liberal Party, which favors the replacement of the present command, has postponed its insistence on the return to active service of officers now separated and will probably drop its championship of Mahas.

- b. The ill-advised creation of the Advisory Council (See SO-8636, Advisory Council on Politico - Military Affairs, of 13 October 1947) comprising retired army officers, will not only diminish the authority of the Supreme Military Council and of the General Staff, but will also carry the disputes of the parties into the army. In addition, this council will provide a means whereby retired officers can return to active service.
- c. The replacement of Ventiris must occur immediately, thereby allowing the use of the present two-month period of amnesty for the orientation of the new command and the preparation of the army along new lines.

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